

City of
Fitchburg



Department of
Public Works

COMMISSIONER

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STREETS & PARKS

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SEWER COLLECTION

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WATER

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ENGINEERING

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CEMETERIES

115 Mount Elam Road
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February 16, 2022

U. S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 1
5 Post Office Square, Suite 100
Mail code OES04-04
Boston, Massachusetts 02109-3912
Attn: Beth Kudarasukas

Massachusetts D.E.P., CERO
8 New Bond Street
Worcester, MA 01606
Attn: David Boyer

Re: SSO and Dry-Weather CSO Compliance Report

Dear Messrs. Handler and Boyer:

In accordance with the City of Fitchburg's Consent Decree, Paragraph 71, this letter is to serve as the 2021 Compliance Report. In this report we are covering the period from February 1, 2021 to January 31, 2022. It includes a list of sanitary sewer overflows (SSO's) and dry-weather combined sewer overflows (CSO's). A map is provided displaying the locations of all events. A list is provided of private property sewer backups that sought City assistance. Finally, a brief explanation will be provided on how the City expects to meet its water quality-based CSO compliance obligations.

List of SSO's

The City experienced eight (8) sanitary sewer overflows (SSOs) in the reporting period that were the result of issues with the municipally owned sewer system. All SSO's were reported to the MassDEP and EPA, and a Sanitary Sewer Overflow (SSO)/Bypass Notification Form was submitted.

Table 1 (attached), and the attached map includes all SSOs. A brief description of each event is as follows:

- 1) **9 Harrison Avenue, 2/3/21** – The city was notified of a homeowner backing up in their basement. The City responded and jetted the line, removing rags and some minor roots. To reduce the risk of SSOs in this pipe segment, the City cleaned and CCTV'd the pipe. Approximately 3 gallons of sewerage discharged to the basement of the dwelling. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.
- 2) **34 Ash Street, 2/11/21** – A sewer manhole in this area was discovered to have leaked about 15 gallons into the snow surrounding it. The City responded by vacuuming the manhole and jetting the line, removing roots. This area has been added to the City's problem area check list.

- 3) **147 Water Street, 2/18/21** – A sewer manhole was discovered to have overflowed about 4,500 gallons of sewage into a nearby catch basin. After jetting and CCTV of the line the City discovered the pipe to be collapsed. Two spot repairs were made including a cure-in-place liner. Upstream sewer flow was later routed away from this location as part of the CSO-039 project.
- 4) **8 George Street, 3/1/21**– The City responded to a call about sewerage backing up into a basement. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage. The blockage appears to have been caused by a sag in the pipe along with heavy rag build-up. Approximately 150 gallons were discharged to the basement of the residence. The City will be replacing the pipe segment to remove the sag, depending on left-over available funding from the on-going CSO-039 project.
- 5) **317 Kimball Street, 6/26/21** – The City responded to a call about sewerage overflowing from a catch basin. Upon response, the City jetted the line and relieved a blockage of roots. The area was then washed down with water from the vacuum truck and the catch basin was cleaned of sewerage and road grit. Approximately 5,000 gallons were discharged. Root killer will be added as a periodic maintenance task.
- 6) **569 Main Street, 7/19/21**– The City was called to reports of sewer backing up into the building basement. The backup was caused by a heavy rain event. This property has a history of backup issues during rain events. This will be corrected with the “downtown” separation project in a few years. Approximately 5,000 gallons are estimated to have spilled into the building basement.
- 7) **First Street at Railroad Street River Manhole, 7/19/21** – Shortly after a rain event the City noticed this manhole cover to be dislodged. Though an SSO was not witnessed we assumed one occurred due to ragging on the manhole steps and the dislodged cover. We will replace the existing “tabbed” locking frame cover with a more heavy-duty bolted frame and cover. Because an SSO wasn’t witnessed no estimate of discharge could be made.
- 8) **605 Franklin Road, 7/22/21** – The City was called to investigate sewerage pooling on the ground along a sewer easement. The main line was jetted and a blockage was removed. Lyme was spread on the ground in the affected area. Approximately 150 gallons are estimated to have puddled and infiltrated into the ground. Spot repairs were made on this line to reduce the chances of future SSOs.

List of Dry-Weather CSO Events

The City experienced no dry weather CSOs in the reporting period that were the result of issues with its municipally owned system.

List of Private Property Backups

The City uses "SeeClickFix" to monitor private property sewer backups. SeeClickFix is a web-based software which allows the City, or constituents to enter and track sewer issues. To date, the system has been well received by both residents and City personnel. Table 3 contains a list from the SeeClickFix system for private homeowner, or non-SSO related issues. Homeowners are responsible for calling a plumber to clear blockages or infrastructure failures within the privately owned sewer service, or within the building plumbing.

Qualifying statement to meet water quality obligations.

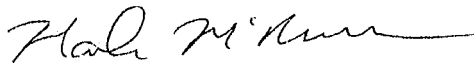
In the reporting year, the City neared completion of its Sewer System Evaluation Study, (SSES) Phase IV. Phase IV includes complete multi-sensor inspection of the City's trunk sewer. During the reporting year, the City also hired a contractor to clean five double barrels siphons in the City, 3 of which are on the trunk sewer near the WWTF. Additional heavy cleaning will was also conducted at specific locations of the trunk sewer and large diameter sewers throughout the City. The City also separated 22 combination manholes during the reporting year, and will be separating additional combination manholes in the coming year using a combination of in-house and outside forces.

Within the reporting period, the City began construction of the CSO-7, 11, 39, and 48 Sewer Separation project. In addition to closing four CSO regulators, the City expects to permanently separate approximately 17 combination manholes within this project. The project is started in November 2020, with work continuing throughout the winter months on combination manhole separation and pipe lining.

We will continue to make strong efforts in the next reporting period to improve water quality to the Nashua River.

If you have any questions regarding this compliance report, please contact Fitchburg Civil Engineer, Jeff Hillman, P.E., at 978-829-1916, or the undersigned.

Very Truly Yours,



Mark McNamara
Fitchburg DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Attachments

Electronic & Hard Copy: Beth Kudarauskas, USEPA, Region 1 Office
 David Boyer, P.E., MassDEP, Central Region Office

Electronic copy:
(Transmittal letter only)

Chief, Environmental Enforcement Section, DOJ
Anu Balakrishna, Assistant U.S. Attorney
Jeff Kopf, Senior Enforcement Counsel, EPA Region 1
Louis Dundin, Assistant Attorney General, Massachusetts AG
Vincent Pusateri, II, Fitchburg City Solicitor

Electronic copy:

Nicholas Erickson, P.E., Fitchburg Commissioner of Public Works
Jeff Hillman, P.E., Fitchburg Civil engineer

"I certify under penalty of law that this document and all attachments were prepared under my direction or supervision in accordance with a system designed to assure that qualified personnel properly gather and evaluate the information submitted. Based on my inquiry of the person or persons who manage the system, or those persons directly responsible for gathering the information, the information submitted is, to the best of my knowledge and belief, true, accurate and complete. I am aware that there are significant penalties for submitting false information, including the possibility of fine and imprisonment for knowing violations."

Mark McNamara.
DPW Interim Deputy Commissioner of Wastewater

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|-----------|-------------------------|--|---|
| 03/01/202 | 18 Matthew St | Snell like rotten eggs that keeps coming and going in backyard over last week. Already had Unifit come out and they said it wasn't a gas leak... thinking maybe sewer gas but no pipes in the backyard where the odor is so maybe from Hancock street? | Someone did come out to check. Not sure if they discovered the source or not (the odor was not present at the time they came to check). But perhaps they did find the source and fixed it because there hasn't been a recurrence of the odor since then. |
| 3/20/2020 | 152 South St | Sewage spill seeping from wall down side walk smells very bad, between 142 and 152 South St. | Leaking Lateral. Homeowner issue. |
| 4/21/2020 | 64 Hope St | cracked cover | Carl responded and replaced cracked cover. |
| 4/21/2020 | 100 Elm St | back up in basement toilets | tony responded, opened up all manholes on Elm, Wallace, and Grove. Everything flowing as it should. A little bit of drain back up in drain line on grove, but looks like just standing water. |
| 4/21/2021 | 96 Bel Air Dr | back up at house when running water | carl responded, main line flowing fine. Tony told homeowner that we would alert here if it was a city issue, but she should call a plumber |
| 5/1/2020 | 52 Ward St | manhole in back yard near end of driveway is surcharging | private MH in back yard serves 25 Central Ave, and we also determined via dye test and CCTV that 42 Central Ave ties in just downstream of the MH at a wye. We cleared the roots out of the MH, added root killer, and gave some root killer to the resident to keep the roots at bay |
| 5/15/2020 | 66 Railroad St | tub and toilet backing up | ray jettied line with eddie, took out some rags and grease. Homeowner said it fixed the issue. She called back again on 5/18/20, said it backed up again. Carl and Eddie went over and jettied line twice. Said everything is flowing fine. Tony looked at old video, shows the lateral packed with roots. Advised homeowner and dropped off some root killer to her to see if that would help. |
| 5/21/2020 | 34 Berkley St | backing up, plumber TV'd line and found that lateral pipe had collapsed | tony told homeowner to file claim, but I said there is no guarantee he will be reimbursed. He believes it occurred because of paving/pulverizing in the area by P.J. Albert. |
| 6/3/2020 | 12 Airport Rd | noticed driving to work every morning horrible odor coming from nash in the area by bern's rd right after intersection. actually made me wretch this morning, smells like raw sewage | Snell has dissipated. Likely came from trunk sewer off-gassing through covers. |
| 6/8/2020 | 55 Jeanette St | broken cover reported by unifit | ray replaced cover |
| 6/26/2020 | 41 Greenhurst Ave | pump alarm on e-one keeps going off | tony and ken responded, found alarm panel going off in basement. told homeowner to call FR Mahoney for service on e-one, gravity manhole near intersection with wanoosnoc flowing fine. |
| 6/26/2020 | 583 Ashburnham St | homeowner had his lateral cleaned, said something is in main line that might be cause of his back up. | bob and eddie responded, jettied line and said seems to be flowing better, but didn't see a "license plate" as the caller reported at the end of his lateral. Might have been a homeowner issue, or a city issue, hard to say. |
| 7/2/2020 | 460 Clarendon St | Unifit Gas damaged a lateral putting in a new gas line | Tony responded, Unifit repaired broken lateral with 6" PVC, existing lateral is 5" clay. Appeared to still be active. One end they just mortared up the joint since that was how it was originally with concrete just poured around the bell. |
| 6/22/2020 | 5 Linden St | back up in basement when using laundry | Bob and Kevin responded, said main line flowing fine. No one home to answer. Tony called her back and said she has to call a plumber. |
| 7/13/2020 | 348 Cathy St | snaked out 50-feet, backing up still | ray and eddie responded, jettied line, everything flowing fine. Appears that homeowner did not snake far enough to clear lateral. |
| 7/20/2020 | 172-174 Townsend Street | Rattling manhole cover at the beginning of Townsend Street (around #167) | Put bury around cover |
| 9/23/2020 | 275 Franklin Rd | backing up, roots in main line | Tony talked to homeowner on 9/25 and checked main line, told him it could be roots in lateral. He thought unifit broke it, so unifit is coming by to CCTV. Unifit's trench was not on the right side of the road to impact his lateral. Likely roots, owner said it's orangeburg pipe. |
| 10/6/2020 | 46 Mt Globe St | sewerage coming out of wall in front of house, and from a clean out in front of front porch. Feces were witnessed | Todd Health Department that homeowner needs to clear lateral. |
| 10/5/2020 | 55 Central St | back up | Ray responded, main line flowing fine |
| 11/3/2020 | 36 Ronald St | basement backup | tony responded, found that an open clean out in basement was letting sewerage in. Also a drain channel around the basement floor that lead to the clean out, which likely carried groundwater which is why it was worse when it rained, city sewer was flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber |

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| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|------------|------------------------|---|--|
| 11/2/2020 | 510 Franklin Rd | snaked out 100 feet - still backing up, until dug in road in front of house | tony responded, main line flowing fine. Does not look like Unifit dug in location of lateral according to record plan. Called Unifit, they were going to visit home. Told homeowner they should snake line further as lateral is almost 120 feet long. |
| 11/12/2020 | 132 Appleton Cir | back up at house, running slow | Tony responded, sewer flowing fine. checked mth in backyard. told homeowner to snake out line |
| 11/12/2020 | 30 Rockland St | manhole cover missing | replaced manhole frame and cover |
| 12/7/2020 | 86 Hamson Ave | back up at house, snaked out, pipe seems collapse | Homeowner had contractor repair lateral |
| 12/7/2020 | 137 Appleton Cir | back up | Tony found old jet line in lateral. Told homeowner she likely has roots, need to clear it out |
| 12/10/2020 | 175 Marshall Rd | Sewer smells. We've been experiencing this on and off since we moved in 2018. We had a minor back up issue on Sat when it snowed. | Ray responded. Everything appears to be flowing fine. May come from Hollis Hills Farm |
| 12/17/2020 | 139 Parson Circle | back up, coming out of vent under porch | lateral ties into neighbor's lateral. Neighbor lined lateral and didn't reinstate line from 139. Tandem construction dug lateral and re-instated it. |
| 1/10/2020 | 331-499 Nichols Rd | Back up in lateral | Home owner had a back up, and needed to know if they were responsible for the issue. |
| 1/14/2021 | 15 Brigham Street | back up in bathroom, both units of duplex | home states when using shower, it backs up. Adjoining unit also backing up. Checked upstream and downstream MTHs, flowing fine. Homeowner issue, need to call plumber. |
| 12/25/2020 | 29 Westminster Street | Sewer in basement | Checked flow in street. Home owner issue |
| 12/27/2020 | 175 Walton Street | Water trickling in basement | Basement flooded. |
| 12/7/2020 | 45 Pepper Road | water in basement | checked sewer main in street/flowing fine. |
| 12/5/2020 | 120 Marshall St | Building backing up | Talked to home owner, ground water coming in through open pipe. |
| 11/9/2020 | 65 Mount Vernon Street | back up | Homeowner has groundwater in basement. Looks like yard work in back may have covered perimeter drain and prevented it from draining. |
| 11/4/2020 | 158 Green St | Sewer coming out of sidewalk | Advised to have plumber snake the line and call back if back up continues. |
| 11/10/2020 | 33 Payson Street | sewer backup at house | Checked manholes in back of houses. Home owner issue |
| 10/30/2020 | 61 Amiot Street | backup | Checked manholes - Street flowing, homeowner issue |
| 10/28/2020 | 27 Granite Street | Building backing up | Checked manholes - Home owner issue |
| 10/19/2020 | 150 Walton Street | Sewer coming up in parking lot | Streetwork was recently dug up, checked permits. Unifit repaired lateral on 10/29/2020 |
| 10/9/2020 | 226 Clifton St | Sewer odor | When flushing bubbling out of manhole, called plumber at building |
| 9/23/2020 | 72 Webster Street | Sewer backing up in house. | Opened upstream and downstream manholes - All mains flowing - No evidence of odor. |
| 9/24/2020 | 1034 Franklin Road | Sewer in road | Checked street, no sign of sewer in street. |
| 8/26/2020 | 488 Milk Street | Sewer backing up in cleanout | Checked manholes in street. Street flowing fine. |
| 8/27/2020 | 23 Congress Street | Home owner backup - Plumber on site | Home owner's lateral needs repairs. |
| 8/19/2020 | 75 Sawyer Passway | Pump station clogged | Checked upstream and downstream manholes. Main lines flowing fine. |
| 8/14/2020 | 25 Winthrop St | Sewer backup. Home owner's lateral was snaked twice this month. | Yacd out pump station due to high level alarm. Rags were bound around pumps. |
| 8/10/2020 | 188 Townsend St | Sewer backup | Tony Received a call on 1/28/21 from Aegis Engineering. Asking about any history of work being done by the city in the last few years. Explained that the only work we know of is the CSS project about 9 years ago or so. |
| 8/10/2020 | 66 Institute Street | Backup | Checked manholes, flowing fine. |
| 6/24/2020 | 91 Payson St | Sewage running down driveway. | Checked manholes, flowing fine. |
| 6/29/2020 | 64 Autumn Dr | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, running fine |
| 6/29/2020 | 35 Richardson Road | Manhole cover off. | Put manhole cover back on. |
| 6/20/2020 | 4 Lawrence Street | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, all mains running fine. |
| 6/8/2020 | 32 Adams Street | Sewer backup | Checked manholes, all mains running fine. |
| 6/2/2020 | 33 Forest Street | Sewer blockage | homeowner has a broken backflow preventer |
| 5/21/2020 | 36 Albee Street | Sewer backup | homeowner has a broken lateral that is leaking. Told health department. |
| 3/16/2020 | 112 Walton Street | Line backing up | Checked manholes. All mains running fine. |

Main line flowing. Notified Plumber. Note: Unifit patch located in front of house.

Table 3 - Private SSO Events & Service Call Log (February 1, 2020 to January 31, 2021)

| Date | Address | Nature of Call | Findings |
|-----------|----------------------|--|--|
| 5/13/2020 | 42 Phillips Street | back up in basement | Ray responded. Looks like Unifit had a newer pole where lateral might be. Tony called Unifit, pole is over 5 years old. Tony also recalled responding to the same house in a previous year, they had a collapsed pipe near the MH, doesn't appear to have ever been fixed. |
| 3/19/2020 | 44 Lawton Avenue | sewer back up in house | checked main line, seems to be flowing fine |
| 2/11/2020 | 48 Woodworth Avenue | back up in house | carl responded, he said upstream and downstream manholes were flowing, however the lateral in the MH that leads to 48 was blocked with rags on the bench from the lateral. Pushed rags down main line, and homeowner was going to add drano to line. |
| 3/11/2020 | 216 Charles St | house back up | Plumber couldn't get through lateral. Unblocked lateral from inside the manhole. Plumber was then able to jet and tv lateral. |
| 2/20/2020 | 27 Clearview Ave | back up | ray responded, checked main lines, flowing fine, told homeowner to call a plumber |
| 3/5/2020 | 14 Proctor Avenue | back up at house | Root ball at end of lateral. Ran saw in main to try to cut roots to see if that would help homeowner. |
| 2/19/2020 | 14 Putnam Street | back up | ray and eddie responded, the manholes were flowing fine. Property owner calling a plumber. |
| 2/24/2020 | 410 North St | back up | manholes flowing fine, told homeowner to call plumber |
| 3/5/2020 | 42 Phillips Ave | back up | lines flowing in street, jetted street. Suggested owner call plumber |
| 5/15/2020 | 1077 South St | pipe in basement is leaking | carl responded and bob, main lines fine, it is a homeowner issue |
| 5/12/2020 | 64 Mt Vernon St | back up at house | ray and ed responded, sewer on easement is flowing fine. Tony also talked to homeowner, he said he's had roots before but he just wanted us to check main line first. Homeowner will call a jetting company. |
| 4/20/2020 | 133 Hurd St | back up | back up, all main lines flowing, told homeowner to call a plumber |
| 4/24/2020 | 4 Maverick Street | plumber requested access to MH | bob opened manhole to see if homeowner's lateral was entering MH to assist the property owner, it was not. |
| 3/22/2020 | 18 Mathew Street | | Main had good flow, no odor detected. |
| 3/26/2020 | 325 Bouelle Street | back up into basement | carl and eddie responded, sewer is ripping through, it's a homeowner issue. |
| 3/2/2020 | 17 Sanna Road | | Lateral blocked. Needs a plumber to tv and snake line. |
| 2/10/2020 | 276 Lunenburg Street | clean out has sewer coming out of it in trailer park | city sewer is fine, roofer man is coming to clean private lines in trailer park |
| 1/19/2021 | 66 Thomdike Street | back up in basement sink | homeowner said she would do laundry and back up into sink. Tony and ray responded, jetted line, but main line was fine, told homeowner she might have roots, based on TV. Gave her some Root-X |